

Spanish Government Wants to Tax the Sun

Written by Marco Attard
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In Mediterranean countries using solar power sounds like a great idea-- but not so much in Spain, where the government punishes small solar energy producers with taxes, fines, and even "visits" from what amounts to the Solar Police.



The Local reports the Spanish government recently changed regulations to allow inspectors to raid suspicious properties through simple administrative authorisation. Should suspects deny entry the Industry Department simply asks for a court order to guarantee the inspectors access via national police.

Such measures join fines of up to €30 million on households failing to hook solar equipment to the national grid, and thus not paying the required taxes for the generation of own solar energy.

The former socialist government encouraged the installation of solar power equipment through subsidies and the 2011 legalisation private energy generation, known in Spain as "autoconsumo." As many as 5000 Spanish households took advantage of such schemes, investing in equipment to reduce power bills later.

Reportedly Spanish solar power generation capacity exceeds demand by over 60%.

However the current Spanish government has different plans-- it owes debts worth €26 billion to power production companies due to energy cost and price regulation by the previous regime. It also fears autoconsumo will lead to more Spaniards exiting the national grid. Thus the taxes and fines in order to pay off the "tariff deficit," the difference between the cost of electric grid

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operation and the money it makes.

“Charging a fee for generating your own energy sounds absurd, but in the long term, passing a higher proportion of the cost of running the grid to low-income customers is also unpalatable,” Bloomberg says. “Compromises will need to be made on this issue in more countries than just Spain.”

However former Spanish secretary for the environment Teresa Ribera describes it as “like asking cyclists to pay a levy to keep open the petrol stations they don’t use.”

Other European countries, including Germany and Italy, are still pushing solar power... at least until the big power producers start billing their currently green agendas. Either way, the EU already opened an investigation on the solar tax.

Go [Spain's Solar Police to Kick in Your Door \(The Local\)](#)

Go [Spain Hurts Solar With Plan to Penalise Power Producers \(Bloomberg\)](#)